National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship

2843. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship to be awarded every year to students who have passed class VIII, as announced in the 2007-08 annual budget;

(b) how many students have been awarded the scholarship during the last year; and

(c) whether Government is planning to increase the number of scholarships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme is scheduled to be implemented from the year 2008-09.

(b) No scholarship was awarded during 2007-08.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

Exemption of NET to M.Phil. and Ph.D. degree holders

2844. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the exemption from National Eligibility Test (NET) given by UGC to candidates with M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees for teaching in graduate and post graduate courses, respectively, applies to all the universities in the country; and

(b) if so, why some State universities under UGC are not following this for appointing teachers to various colleges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), it has notified the 2nd Amendment Regulation 2006 (on 14.6.2006) that provides for exemption to Ph.D. candidates from the National Eligibility Test (NET). This applies to every university established or incorporated by or under a Central Act or a State Act, and every institution, including a constituent or an affiliated college recognized by the Commission, in consultation with the university concerned under Clause (f) of section 2 of the UGC Act, 1956, as well as every institution 'deemed-to-be-a-university' under Section 3 of the said Act.

Formation of inter-university centre

†2845. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under consideration to form inter-university centre to being parity in higher education in all universities and colleges;

(b) if so, the amount sanctioned for this purpose; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether any time-limit has been prescribed to open inter-university centre and its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Suitablity of college graduates for employment

2846. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 10 to 25 per cent of college graduates are suitable for employment and 9 per cent of graduates of the country are unfit for employment, as per survey conducted by the World Bank;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the present higher education system is merely increasing the number of degree holders and not professionals;

(d) if so, whether Government proposes to check out any action plan to make higher education employment oriented; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) Government's attention has been drawn to a study by a non-official Consultancy Organization, which has been quoted by a publication of the World Bank on "Strengthening Skills and Education for Innovation". According to the study, only 10-25 per cent of "general college graduates in India are suitable for employment". The reason given by the study is that links with industry are low in most educational institutions, leading to curricula that allegedly do not reflect modern technological development or include industrial practices. However, such a conclusion cannot be used for generalizing preference for professional education over general higher education, because both general Higher Education and professional Education are significant contributors to the development of human resource for any society. Relevance of Higher Education is a continuous process. The expansion of Higher Education approved by the National Development Council (NDC) under the Eleventh Plan through substantial increase in allocation and setting up of new IITs, IIMs, Central Universities and other institutions illustrates a balanced growth of Higher Education. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has redesigned its Vocational Education Programme since 2003-04 and the new Career Orientation Programme of the UGC, supplements relevant knowledge, skills and aptitude for gainful employment and self-employment to students pursuing the conventional undergraduate degree curriculum.

Fee of IITs

2847. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: